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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how teachers begin to think about ethics. A partnership between one elementary educator and one doctoral student writing her dissertation on educational ethics was formed. The project has grown to include four vantage points, or sightlines for viewing this issue. The four views come: (1) through the lenses provided by the philosophy of education from educational researchers like John Goodlad, Hugh Sockett, and Nell Noddings; (2) from the classroom (via participants' observations and from conversations engendered from these observations); (3) from evaluation of teachers' rationales for teaching as they do, particularly as these rationales touch on ethical issues; and (4) from an assessment of the effectiveness of the collaboration in light of the goals for critical colleagueship. The researchers established a research model utilizing ethnographic, critical incident, and theoretical methodologies. These approaches were centered on establishing a relationship that connected classroom observation, directed reading, and frequent communication. Together, these components fostered a conversational loop, a focused critical dialogue that expanded participants' understanding of, and interest in, the moral dimensions of classroom practice. (SM)

Sightlines: Collaborating Toward New Vantage Points

Michelle Abeshaus and Bonnie Feather

Although there are significant theoretical discussions centering on the moral responsibilities of educators, little has been done to identify which issues or events serve as catalysts to stir teachers' thinking about such issues. Do such concerns originate in response to coursework or formal professional development environments? Do they result from reading professional journals? Do they occur during hallway consults, as a result of sharing with colleagues? Or, do they arise as a result of critical reflection on our own experiences with our students?

Our presentation is a product of our attempt to understand why and how teachers begin to think about ethics. Toward furthering this understanding, we collaborated, forming a service partnership between one elementary educator and one doctoral student writing her dissertation on educational ethics. Specifically, our partnership was created to respond to the questions of this educator, to respond to her desire to further her own understanding of the moral responsibilities of teachers. Although she intuitively recognized this responsibility, she sought further insight into this little-discussed yet critical area of teacher lore. She sought new "sightlines," new vantage points from which she could "resee" her own teaching.

When Michelle first approached me, I had little idea of what we could really do, but I thought it would take no effort from me to have her observe. I thought, at the very least, I could gain an understanding of current thinking regarding ethics and education. I had done some reading on Kohlberg's developmental theories some years ago, but had read nothing since then. I had really not taken the time to reflect on the larger questions of how I could affect the moral development of my students, other than trying to create children I would like to have in charge of

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the world as I grew older. My intuition was my only guide, and I had no professional conversations on which to base my ongoing efforts in school.

From those original concerns, our project has grown to include four vantage points, that is, four sightlines from which to view our work. Our first view comes through the lenses provided by the philosophy of education, from educational researchers like John Goodlad, Hugh Sockett, and Nel Noddings. Our second view comes directly from the classroom, from Bonnie's concerns, from our observations, and from the conversations engendered by these observations. Our third vantage point provides a larger perspective. Fostered by our discussions with our colleagues, this view seeks to help us evaluate our rationales for teaching as we do, particularly as these rationales touch on ethical issues. From this view, we have been encouraged to reflect upon and articulate our larger goals for our students, as well as how our curriculum and instruction does and does not meet these goals. Finally, our fourth view provides the largest perspective yet. Assuming that moral practice requires inquiry, requires reflection, our final vantage point seeks to assess the effectiveness of our collaboration in light of the goals for "critical collegueship" (Lord, 1995).

View I: A Philosophy of Education

Every subject, every method of instruction, every incident of school life [is] pregnant with moral possibility.

—John Dewey, 1909, *Moral Principles in Education*, p. 58

This project grows out of the assumption that teaching inherently contains ethical responsibilities that the profession must acknowledge, accept, and embrace. In exploring the moral dimensions of teaching, John Goodlad (1990) states that the "primary responsibility of a teacher, technically and morally, is to the students being taught" (p. 14). Goodlad goes on to

identify the moral imperatives that pervade all of education: 1) enculturation—that is, making judgments on behalf of others about what is important and what is good; 2) access to knowledge—that is, what to teach, how to teach it, and who to teach it to; 3) the teacher and the taught—that is, the special relationship of teachers and students within the context of compulsory schooling; and 4) transformation—that is, changing (or trying to change) schools and more importantly, individuals for the better. (p. 19)

Goodlad is not alone in these beliefs about ethics and education. Arguing for the need to acknowledge and explore the “inherently moral nature” of teaching, Johnston (1998) points out that, although there are notable differences in individual positions, there seems to be a fairly coherent philosophical approach to moral principles:

- Teachers act as moral agents all the time, usually unconsciously and often ambiguously.
- Students pick up on the moral messages teachers send out.
- Above and beyond the fact that teachers’ words and actions have moral import simply because they involve the way people treat other people, the consideration of morality in teaching is complicated because by its very nature, teaching aims to change people, and to do so for the better. In other words, the very essence of teaching lies in moral agency.
- Given the fact that teaching is also inherently a social activity, the beliefs, values, and standards of the students also constitute a crucial part of the picture, as does their relation with the teacher. (pp. 162-163)

These four points, as well as the four moral dimensions indicated by Goodlad, outline the basic assumptions from which our work has grown.

Given this foundation, and given Bonnie’s ultimate goal of improving her teaching, particularly in connection to ethical issues, we combined the theoretical with the practical,

identifying areas in which the two intersect, identifying new "sightlines" through which Bonnie could view her practice. In particular, we looked for specific ways in which ethical dimensions surfaced in Bonnie's teaching and as a result of her relationships with students.

View II: Philosophy of Education Meets Ms. Feather's First-Grade Students

Project Conceptualization: Tentative Beginnings

In response to our initial concerns, we sought to answer three primary questions: First, when do ethical moments occur within the environment of the classroom, and do we agree, given our differing perspectives, on what these moments are? In other words, did the moments that I identified as ethically charged feel as noteworthy from Bonnie's position as teacher? Second, how could we go about enhancing our understanding of educational ethics, as well as our ability to identify key ethical moments? Our third question was tied to an important personal/professional assumption about the nature of ethics and learning to be ethical.

I was working from the assumption that ethics are developed, valued, and used by people who first have experienced, questioned, and chosen to behave in ways that are moral as opposed to amoral. Therefore, to foster a society that functions with an ethical "code," morals must be a part of formative experiences. Given this assumption, I dedicated a portion of my curriculum and instruction to teaching ethics from this perspective. Consequently, we were interested in knowing if and how students utilized that which came from my teachings about how to behave in the world.

Project Description: Methodology

Toward addressing these questions, we set up a research model utilizing ethnographic, critical incident, and theoretical methodologies. These approaches were all centered on establishing a relationship that connected classroom observation, directed reading, and frequent

communication. Together, these components fostered a conversational loop—a focused, critical dialogue that expanded our understanding of, and interest in, the moral dimensions of classroom practice.

The spring semester of 1999 presented an ideal opportunity for Michelle to begin observations because I had set myself a goal of changing the class in the direction of more caring, respectful, responsible behaviors. In the first phase of our project, we concentrated on sharing theoretical readings. We worked through our differing responses to this reading and also looked for ways in which these theories might play out within the classroom.

At the same time, I began my classroom observations with the goal of noting anything that seemed morally significant from my perspective as outside observer. My extensive reading in educational ethics, as well as our goal of focusing on the moral, influenced what I saw and how I saw it. In other words, my background assisted me in focusing the “lens” through which I viewed this very busy classroom.

For this very specialized observation, Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen’s (1993), *The Moral Life of Schools* provided useful guidelines. In this study, the authors “sought to investigate the ways in which moral considerations permeate the everyday life of schools and classrooms” with the hope of “understanding the school’s potential as a positive moral force” (pp. xiv, xvii). The goal, then, was a moral lens for increasing sensitivity to potentially moral situations and responsibilities. Toward this end, they created an observer’s guide to “Looking for the Moral:”

Looking for the Moral: An Observer's Guide

Moral Instruction

Deliberate attempts to promote moral instruction and encourage moral behavior.

- I. Moral instruction as a formal part of the curriculum.
- II. Moral instruction within the regular curriculum: lessons that were decidedly moral tone.
- III. Rituals and ceremonies of a celebratory and affirmatory nature:
What made . . . these activities as being essentially moral in nature was the mood or attitude they sought to engender. This included feelings of pride, loyalty, inspiration, reverence, piety, sorrow, prudence, thankfulness, and dedication. These activities also called upon students to identify themselves with causes, social missions, and social and political entities whose goals and purposes lay outside the framework of the students' individual interests and daily concerns. (p. 7)
- IV. Visual displays with moral content.
- V. Spontaneous interjection of moral commentary into ongoing activity.

Moral Practice

"The focus shifts from direct moral instruction to classroom practices and personal qualities of teachers that—sometimes unintentionally—embody a moral outlook or stance" (p. 11).

- VI. Classroom rules and regulations: governing interactions between and among teachers and students.
- VII. The morality of the curricular substructure:
[C]ommonly held assumptions that undergird and facilitate instructional and curricular arrangements of various kinds. . . . They include the assumption that teachers will ask fair questions and give reasonable exams, that turns will be taken when it comes time to speak, that speakers will be given sufficient time to compose their thoughts, that others will listen to what they say, and that everyone will face similar standards of judgment when it comes to grading and evaluation. (p. 28)
 - A. Expectations of truthfulness.
 - B. Assumption of worthwhileness.
 - C. Issues of social justice.
- VIII. Expressive morality within the classroom: facial expressions and other such physical gestures.

As shown, the authors make a distinction between intended and unintended influences, with those coming as a result of purposeful instruction being described as intended, due largely to "the mood or attitude they sought to engender." These influences were purposeful in that they were used to affect behavior in very specific ways. In contrast, those influences coming as a result of classroom practices or the personal qualities of the teacher—at least when not directly linked to ethical issues—were considered unintended. Under this category, interactions, underlying rules and assumptions, as well as response expressions were described as important. Interestingly, as the authors point out, "many of the unintended influences are in operation *all or most of the time*, whereas the intended ones are more episodic and self-contained" (p. 44).

Although this outline provides a useful means of generally categorizing types of observations, it falls short in terms of more subtle classroom occurrences. For example, in terms of Moral Instruction, who and what determines whether deliberate moral instruction is occurring? The assumption seems to be that we all know the difference between what is moral and what is not, but in actuality, without clear articulation of what is included, how can we be sure we are communicating about the same things? In terms of Moral Practice, these distinctions become even more difficult to discern, particularly when working with the complexity of unstated and/or unarticulated assumptions. In the end, given these difficulties, how can we expect students to understand and act in accordance to a moral substructure that has never been acknowledged or explained, remaining hidden in the realm of unintended influences?

Given these concerns, I had to be extremely careful in my observing, pondering "the significance of matters that are commonly overlooked" (Jackson, et al., 1993, p. 120). Thus, I could exploit my position as outsider, looking for moments when the involved parties seemed to be responding based on differing assumptions or perceptions. As I attended to the details of each

incident, I looked for potential gaps in communication—moments when intention and understanding did not align. Because these observations are directly tied to perceptions—mine, as well as the members of the classroom—it was essential for me to check my notes with Bonnie. Sometimes I could observe real disjunctures, and sometimes, as an outsider, I was just not understanding the full context of the situation.

Early in our work, I purposefully kept my notes focused on what I was observing, avoiding any reflection on my part. However, at the end of the school year, hoping for provocative feedback, I shared a copy of these notes with Bonnie.

At this time, it had been validating to me that Michelle was seeing some positive interactions in my classroom, but there seemed to be the potential for something much stronger. There were two major problems with the work so far. First, Michelle was working at a disadvantage—not really knowing the context of many of her observations. Second, I was not able to read the observations quickly enough to make changes in my actions.

Over the summer, we met to reflect upon what we had accomplished and to consider our goals for future work, outlining a plan for phase two. Our primary concern was that we were not communicating regularly enough and as a result, our work lacked depth. Consequently, I increased the frequency of observations, and more importantly, I copied my notes for Bonnie on a regular basis. These notes included questions and comments made during and after these observations, providing immediate reflection for us to work through together. In fact, this ongoing dialogue, both on paper and in person, marks the crucial difference between phase one and phase two. Once we were able to establish a conversational loop—that is, a continuous means of reflection and response—based on the issues we saw unfolding before us, our work became more dynamic, more purposeful, and most importantly, more meaningful.

Moral Instruction: The View from Within

Using Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen's basic rubric as a guide, our findings can be divided into two primary sections, Moral Instruction and Moral Practice. The intended instruction was easy to identify. Included in Bonnie's curriculum goals was the bettering of her students through the teaching of specific values.

The time during the day when most of these lessons are explicitly taught is during "Compliments, Concerns, and Solutions" time. This is one time, though not the only time, when the school-wide focus of "Empathy, Respect, Responsibility, and Reporting" is emphasized. Children are encouraged during this time to take responsibility for their actions. Most classrooms in our building engage in a time each day for children to express any concerns they have not been able to resolve by themselves. Another time when these lessons are initiated is through reading stories aloud from Random Acts of Kindness for Kids and Chicken Soup for the Kids' Soul. After reading a story, children are given an opportunity to narrate stories that illustrate similar difficulties. Finally, explicit lessons occur as incidents arise that lend themselves to discussion and learning.

Though I had not purposely identified particular virtues prior to our work, through Michelle's observations, I am able to identify several that arise regularly. Honesty, respect—that is, respect for self, for social institutions, for other cultures, and for the environment—fairness, and caring about each other are the virtues we have focused on.

Honesty is always difficult for children. I try to present an assumption that they are about to be honest and let them have a chance to live up to the expectation rather than trapping them in a lie. In discussions about telling the truth, I let children know that it is sometimes hard

to be honest, that they may expect negative consequences at times, but that they will feel better about themselves and that others will respect them more if they are honest.

Any classroom will function more smoothly if there is respect for the teacher and for the tasks presented. I try to teach respect in several forms. Lessons in self-respect take the form of encouragement to do our best, whether anyone else is watching, and being persistent even when a task is tiresome or difficult. It is important to begin helping children develop a system of intrinsic rewards rather than always expecting overt or even material rewards for the work they do. I frequently model the language of self-coaching or self-encouragement as well as self-congratulation. Children don't always come to school knowing that it feels good to work at a task and even better to complete a task that is difficult.

Empathy is one of the values that our school has identified this year as a school-wide goal. It works well to show that if we try to imagine what others are feeling, we will be better able to decide how to treat them. I want children to know that they are expected to show respect for others by listening when others are talking, by giving ample wait time without showing impatience, by not raising hands when others are speaking or thinking, and by helping others who seem to be in need.

Responsibility, another of the goals adopted by our school, is built through honesty and respect. I expect children to admit what they have done, apologize sincerely for their actions, and ask the other child if there is anything they can do to make it right. I acknowledge that it is not easy to do, and I give liberal praise for children who do own up to their transgressions. I use the word "decide" liberally. I tell children they are old enough now to make some decisions for themselves and help them to realize that it is their choice ultimately whether to conform to rules.

As children begin taking responsibility, they feel that everyone should be just as responsible. Often this leads to tattling. Teachers frequently discourage tattling, even while recognizing the need to be open to the reporting of unresolved and potentially serious difficulties. This year, our school has decided to define "reporting" as "telling to prevent problems rather than to get someone in trouble."

This distinction in language shows a school-wide focus on nurturing students to become responsible, caring people. Our staff wants students to know we care about them and that we want them to care about others. Within our class, there are many incidents connected to care. When children are hurt, I expect others to first ask, "Are you okay?" and then ask if they can help. When children are crying during the resolution of a difficult concern, I encourage others to fetch a tissue or to pat them on the back for support. Students increasingly show their care for each other in small, spontaneous ways. I try to notice and praise these nurturing actions.

Moral Practice: The View from Outside

As might be expected, the unintended lessons of Moral Practice were more difficult to identify, requiring far more careful attention to what was said and done in the classroom. As with the intended Moral Instruction, Bonnie frequently provided moral lessons about virtuous behavior but at a more subtle level. Specifically, she regularly modeled honesty, responsibility, respect, fairness, trust, and care. Such virtues were most often exhibited in her interactions with her students; clearly, she cares about who they are, how they perceive themselves, and how they respond to others.

In terms of Moral Practice, the language I was hearing—from Bonnie or from the students—was central to the observation process. Not only was I focusing on the content of what was said, I had to attend to how it was said and for what purpose. As indicated, an

important part of my observation process was the looking for disjunctures, those moments when the stated expectations did not fit with student responses. More often than not, these disjunctures were indicated by language choices—the decisions individuals make in the context of the classroom, in the context of their relationships with one another, in the context of their relationship with both the curriculum and the instruction.

One outcome of reading Michelle's notes was the frequency with which she shows that my intentions are clear to an outsider. At the same time, I noticed that there were times when Michelle noted and attached importance to statements when I had not really thought about what I had said. There were many unconscious moments that she noted as having implications I had not realized. I wanted immediately to go back to those situations and explore whether indeed my words or actions could have been more intentional. I wanted to dig deeper into whether the students had taken ideas from our interactions that I had not considered. I also wanted to explain some situations so that Michelle's following observations would be clearer. I felt that she could have a much deeper understanding of the classroom and the students if we took advantage of the opportunity we had to understand the students better.

The best example of our focus on language is the word "decide." Last spring I had used the word in a discussion about one of the stories from Chicken Soup for the Kids' Soul. I had talked about a character who had "decided" it was up to her to be happy. After the discussion, Michelle asked me whether the students knew what it means to "decide" to be happy. She asked how else I might teach this lesson and whether I considered it a primary or secondary lesson. Michelle's question about "decide" led me to think specifically about this word and to realize that although I considered it a recurring theme, I needed to use it more consciously for it to be recognizable to the students. For example, we needed to talk about "deciding" to take on

challenges to overcome difficulties. As a result, this became an essential element of the moral language I sought to develop with my students.

Stepping back to view educational ethics from a broader perspective, we can see a further connection between ethics and decision-making. In some sense, ethics in education is about deciding. Specifically, as teachers, we decide what our students need to know—that is, what knowledge is of value; we decide how we will transmit that knowledge—that is, how we are going to instruct our students; we decide who we are going to be to our students—that is, what type of moral model we shall be; and we decide what kind of relationships we will have with our students—that is, what will be the nature of our interactions with those left in our charge. Through our actions and especially, through our decisions about language—how we choose to speak, coupled with what we choose to say—we send a continuous message to our students about who we hope they will be.

View III: Reflecting Upon Our Practice

The View from Inside

Although Moral Instruction and Moral Practice represent useful categories from which to begin to understand the complexities of ethics and education, there is an essential aspect of the morally responsible practitioner that goes beyond these basic categories. These “findings” or concerns came from our dialogic loop, our conversations that wove together the perspectives of both the insider/teacher and outsider/observer, as we reflected upon our observations of particular classroom incidents, our readings, and our goals as teachers.

The first concern stems from the nature of the “subject.” In other words, can moral lessons be taught explicitly—or can they really only be suggested or introduced? One basic difference between teaching morals and teaching other elements of the traditional curriculum is

that we can never know if our students have truly learned the moral lessons we try to teach; the real "test" for such lessons may not come for years.

Bonnie also had some concerns about developmental readiness and the ability of young children to internalize moral decision-making. She was concerned that they could not make the rules their own; rather, they would appear to act morally only to please others or out of fear of being caught. Bonnie was rightfully concerned that such "acting" would disappear in an environment in which such moral behavior was not nurtured and/or expected.

Despite my reservations about students' ability to truly learn moral lessons, I am convinced that it is still my professional moral responsibility to teach students what is right and wrong, as well as how to behave within this framework. I need to consciously provide experiences that allow students to practice moral decision-making. These lessons are learned through experience, just as other curricular elements are learned, whether we are talking about facts, concepts or processes. We all need some basic experiences in self-determination to function in society as respected, valued individuals. Toward this end, I use stories, daily events, and incidental events to help children practice making decisions, thinking about their actions, and behaving in ways that are morally responsible. The second concern, then, stems from two related questions: Which values should be emphasized, and how should teachers orchestrate these moral experiences to most effectively teach students?

Bonnie's third concern stems from her perceived role as "master manipulator." This descriptor was originally used offhandedly; however, it seems quite apropos. As a teacher, Bonnie was conscious of her responsibility to manipulate or influence her students to behave in particular ways. As a result, because she spends so much time elaborating on expectations for behavior, whether they be social or academic, Bonnie may be perceived as being overly

directive. However, although this may be the perception of some, such careful explication of classroom expectations does not leave students guessing about what is and is not acceptable. Not only are students instructed on what they are to do, they are also often given the reasons for why they are to do so.

For example, when students were praised and then rewarded (with marbles in their class marble jar) for good behavior during PE (physical education), they were first included in a discussion of what counted as good behavior. They were not left guessing which behavior was good and which behavior should be duplicated at the next PE class. Similarly, when several students spoke out without first raising their hands, I explained that "I can't hear you when more than one person is talking." Again, students were given a reason for why certain behaviors were important in our classroom.

In the coldest sense, teachers are master manipulators. They use a collection of techniques to get students to behave and/or think in particular ways. From a more positive, caring perspective, educators teach students how to survive and hopefully, how to thrive in the world of the classroom and the world at large. At any level, teachers provide coping skills to students for whatever comes next in their lives. These skills must address social, intellectual and academic needs. From this perspective, such "manipulation," then, is at the core of the educational mission. As should be clear, then, Bonnie's "directiveness" does not come from her position as authority figure; rather, it comes from her role as caring teacher, from her belief in the importance of clarifying expectations for desired and desirable behavior.

The fourth concern is a concern about equity—or more precisely, the need to be perceived as acting fairly on behalf of all students. Because I am concerned with meeting the needs of individuals, students are treated as individuals. Rather than having a set discipline

policy that applies to every student under every circumstance, behavioral issues are treated as they arise in response to the particular set of circumstances surrounding that incident. Although this approach is best for students, I worry that students or parents may see me as favoring some students over others because consequences for misconduct are not always the same.

A final concern might be described as a concern for sharing, a concern for extending our conversation, inviting colleagues to consider their moral responsibilities. My experience is that teaching values is more effective when similar values and language are emphasized and practiced in other classrooms, and most effective when the entire school emphasizes and practices similar values and language. When students are able to use their skills and language with others, they find power and satisfaction in solving their social difficulties.

As an added layer of our partnership, our goal in the second phase of this project was to broaden our conversation to include interested colleagues, to initiate and sustain a conversation that extends beyond the walls of one classroom. Toward this end, we shared our on-going findings with a small gathering of educators from throughout our school district.

Getting feedback from our discussion group is important to assure that our impressions of our work and the value of teaching moral and ethical behavior are not wildly different from those of other critically reflective teachers; it is important to know that others question themselves in similar ways and come to at least some of the same conclusions regarding children.

The View from Outside

Although our conversations in response to my observations were mostly centered on specific interactions or relationships within the classroom, our discussions with colleagues took a broader stance, focusing instead on understanding our assumptions—our underlying

rationale—for how and why we teach the way we do. From these meetings, I was able to identify several prevailing themes related to the moral responsibilities of teachers.

The first theme regards the role of the teacher. Given that teachers cannot help but pass on the values of our culture, teachers must take the responsibility to “remake society” on a conscious level. Although all the teachers did not agree about how overt they were in this role, they did agree that teachers must be reflective, that they should not serve as mouthpieces for others’ programs and/or values. Recognizing that our students are a captive audience, teachers must decide which values are acceptable or even desirable for transmission and which are not.

The second theme centers on what these teachers consider essential in their teaching. Despite their different teaching situations, they believe that their responsibility is to enable students to be successful in the world beyond the classroom. As such, their goal is to provide physical and verbal strategies for coping with injustice, for interacting with people who seem antagonistic or who appear to be different, for assessing character (especially, trustworthiness), and most importantly, for taking active control of one’s environment and one’s life. These strategies can be understood as a moral language—a language toward problem solving, toward taking responsibility, toward fostering caring relationships.

These are large lessons at any level that ultimately come from these teachers’ deep care and concern for the well-being of their students. Because they are driven by genuine care, what they teach, how they teach it, and especially, how they communicate and interact with their students are all based upon their respect for who their students are as individuals and whether these individuals have the opportunity and the skills to go on to fulfill their potential as citizens in a democracy. Ultimately, this care and respect manifests itself both in what they deliberately

teach—that is, Moral Instruction—as well as in how they teach—that is, the Moral Practice coming from their own personal moral commitments.

View IV: “Manipulation” on a Grander Scale

The Ethical Responsibility to Transform

The fourth and final view comes from the three previous views—comes from the theoretical writings about professional responsibilities, comes from the questions and concerns shared in our professional discussion group, comes from the belief that what is important in one classroom is important in others. Specifically, how can we share our learnings with an increasingly larger group of educators, given our assumption that these attributes are not only acceptable but are necessary for good teachers?

In his text, *The Moral Base for Teacher Professionalism*, Sockett (1993) describes a view of teaching “as primarily moral (i.e., dedicated to an individual’s welfare)” that requires reflective practice, requires “moral commitment and intellectual rigor” toward professional betterment (p. 13). Taking another perspective on reflective practice, Lord (1995) introduces a concept of “critical colleagueship” that utilizes “increasingly more powerful and revealing questions about the practice of teaching” toward “greater reflectiveness and sustained learning” (p. 184). (See Appendix A.)

When we began this project, both of us were watching from afar. Our engagement was minimal, and we were both unsure of how to proceed—or even if we wanted to proceed. We were not particularly reflective, and we were not critical colleagues. In contrast, in phase two, we became partners in this endeavor, as I was able to see how my teaching and the students could benefit. The frequency of interaction was the most important factor. Because of the new

procedures, I gave myself the time to read, reflect, examine, and potentially change my practices.

This project has been a gift to me. This came about as a result of trust between us.

Our commitment to working together has grown as we have come to trust one another and as we have been able to develop an understanding of how we might help one another, how we might expand our knowledge of the subject, and consequently, how we might improve our practice in light of these new understandings. In terms of "critical collegueship," our relationship has been marked by the qualities deemed essential by Lord: our deliberate investigation has been driven by an intense desire to seek out new ideas, even if what is new leads to ambiguity and uncertainty. Our third phase marks our future, marks our "knowing how to go on." In this phase of our project, we hope to share our findings and open our professional dialogue to include more and more colleagues. However, within this hope, we are conscious of the need to respect the time and beliefs of fellow educators.

Although we are truly interested in hearing the perspectives of others, in identifying new vantage points, new "sightlines" that may currently be beyond our vision, we also recognize that the assumption that such moral reflection and responsibility are necessary to good teaching drives our need to enter a larger professional dialogue. If we are concerned about providing the best service for our students, then we must insist on what is essential to good teaching. As Oser (1994) states, "moral culture, moral atmosphere, and moral community are dimensions that can and should be emphasized. The making of morality, or the making of a moral dimension, cannot be established once but has to be undertaken continuously" (p. 99). This suggests that providing students with a moral language within the context of one classroom is necessary but not sufficient. More importantly, it suggests that "the making of morality" requires continuous work, work that extends far beyond the boundaries of a single classroom. In a sense, then,

learning a moral language is a first step, but a step that must be nurtured and advanced by every teacher for every student. Thus, it is imperative that our profession recognize and accept our moral responsibilities for our contribution in creating the kinds of individuals we would like to have in charge of the world.

Appendix A

Lord's "Critical Collegueship"

In his chapter, "Teachers' Professional Development: Critical Collegueship and the Role of Professional Communities," Lord (1995) describes "critical collegueship" as follows:

The point is to ask increasingly more powerful and revealing questions about the practice of teaching, especially about those facets of teaching that are influenced by the constructivist approaches so richly described in standards documents and the research literature. This kind of professional development provides support for greater reflectiveness and sustained learning. It invites teachers to think more deeply and experiment more thoroughly with what, for many, are altogether novel ways of teaching. Through exchanges that support the description and redescription of teaching practices, it substitutes a more complex phenomenology of teaching for commonplace instrumentalist accounts. (p. 184)

Lord later outlines six elements of critical collegueship:

1. Creating and sustaining productive disequilibrium through self-reflection, collegial dialogue, and on-going critique.
2. Embracing fundamental intellectual virtues. Among these are openness to new ideas, willingness to reject weak practices or flimsy reasoning when faced with countervailing evidence and sound arguments, accepting responsibility for acquiring and using relevant information in the construction of technical arguments, willingness to seek out the best ideas or the best knowledge from within the subject-matter communities, greater reliance on organized and deliberate investigations rather than learning by

accident, and assuming collective responsibility for creating a professional record of teachers' research and experimentation.

3. Increasing the capacity for empathetic understanding (placing oneself in a colleague's shoes). That is, understanding a colleague's dilemma in the terms in which he or she understands it.
4. Developing and honing the skills and attributes associated with negotiation, improved communication, and the resolution of competing interests.
5. Increasing teachers' comfort with high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty, which will be regular features of teaching for understanding.
6. Achieving collective generativity—"Knowing how to go on" (Wittgenstein 1958)—as a goal of successful inquiry and practice. (pp. 192-193)

Because "reflective practice" can mean many things (and consequently nothing of significance), Lord's detailed description of "critical colleagueship" provides a useful tool for evaluating our own work. These guidelines also provide specific guidance for the professional moral stance of reflective practice indicated by Sockett.

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